

Reliance

by Never a Hero

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Summary: After the staggering loss of Eli Vance, Gordon and Alyx must continue on in their journey to find Judith and the mysterious Borealis. They must draw hope from each other and find the strength to continue when all seems lost. Set after HL2:E2, Gordon/Alyx.

Reliance

AN: This is set directly after Eli Vance dies at the end of Half-Life 2: Episode 2, I hope you all enjoy! Also, I do not own Half-Life or any of its characters.

"Oh my god, Dad... no!" Gordon awoke to Alyx's sobs. He stood, watching as she knelt at her father's side, clutching his vest. The pool of blood coming from his neck stained her jeans. D0g stood, whirring sadly in the corner. Gordon sat down beside Alyx slowly, placing a comforting hand on her back. She turned her gaze from her father's body and flung her arms around Gordon, burying her face in his shoulder. "Gordon... oh god Gordon... what are we going to do..."

"We're going to find the Borealis." Gordon answered in a strong, calming voice. "We're going to find it and destroy it. That's what your father wanted."

Alyx looked up at him in awe.

"Come on now, we have to get his body to Doctor Kleiner before any more Advisors arrive." Gordon rose, helping a still-shaking Alyx to her feet. She held onto him for support as they walked slowly out of the hangar. D0g gingerly lifted the body of his creator and followed behind Alyx and Gordon.

They entered the control room to Kleiner and Magnusson bickering over coordinates.

"Arne, be resonable! I am an MIT professor of theoretical physics, I believe I know that the first coordinate indicates-"

"GODDAMNIT GORDON! Keep that infernal canine out of here! These machines are fragile and very costly, he might -" Magnusson's jaw dropped when his eyes fell upon the corpse of Eli Vance in the mechanical beast's arms.

"Oh my goodness! Eli! What's transpired?" Kleiner's face was a mixture of shock and sorrow.

"There was nothing we could do, Doctor." Alyx hugged Kleiner with a sob.

"Alyx is correct, we were both rendered immobile. Two Combine Advisors ambushed us just before Alyx and I could leave to find Doctor Mossman. They killed Eli in front of us. D0g saved us from the same fate by attacking an Advisor and severely wounding it, they both retreated." Gordon said darkly.

"Oh good god! It seems your Dad really did protect you by building D0g, Alyx. I'm just sorry he couldn't have come sooner." said Kleiner. D0g whirred mechanically, Gordon assumed it was the best whimper the robot could muster. "At any rate, Alyx my dear, you and Gordon really must be going within the next day or so if you do find yourself able. Gordon can go alone if you need time to grieve, which all of us can understand undoubtedly. It is a hard thing to lose your father at a young age. I will take care of all proceedings in your father's burial,"

Alyx nodded, wiping her tears away roughly with the back of her gloved hand. "I'll be ready to go tomorrow morning before breakfast. I just need some time to rest."

"Oh, dear Alyx... you really can stay behind and be just as useful here at White Forrest. You are a valued ally to Gordon, I'm sure, but he is capable of finding Doctor Mossman alone. You taking time to grieve is more than understandable, my dear. Do not worry about Gordon, he'll be fine. He always is." Kleiner tried to reason with her.

"I'll take that into consideration, Doctor Kleiner. I suppose the chopper will be prepped for the journey whether I choose to be on it or not. Can I make my decision by morning?"

"Of course Alyx, of course. Your father prepared your room for you the moment he heard you were coming... He loved you so deeply, Alyx."

"I know he did, Doctor. Thank you." Alyx left the control room and entered the main base.

"Gordon, I'll need to have a word with you in private." said Kleiner, beckoning Gordon to follow him into the hallway. "Magnusson, you won't mind of course." Magnusson stood, still frozen. "Gordon, now you must not misunderstand me as I may very well come off as insensitive. You understand the suppression fields are down, Gordon, and your stasis has kept you at age 27 literally erasing any age gap... Think of it Gordon! Your children, between your physical

fitness and brilliance and Alyx's street smarts and compassion... they would be the pillars of the next generation!"

"Doctor Kleiner, with all due respect, I understand your motives from a scientific standpoint but I do not believe Earth being the war-torn, dangerous place it is at present time is a safe environment for child bearing or child raising, much less the child of a leader in the Resistance and Anticitizen One. And furthermore, Doctor, I should never want Alyx to find herself with any regrets. Her father just died, now's not the right time for her to make any life altering choices." Gordon answered quickly and firmly.

Kleiner nodded "By that reasoning then, you believe Alyx should stay at the base."

"I believe..." Gordon paused and thought over his words. He was right. Alyx, in her grief stricken state, could not be completely objective in her decision making. However, who were they to choose for her? "I believe that White forest is no safer than anywhere else in the world. Eli was just killed by Combine Advisors right here at White Forest. I know that if she stays with me, I will always be able to keep her safe whereas if she stays here and the base is raided, I can do nothing."

"So you do care for her as deeply as I had originally hypothesized."

"Yes, sir."

"Alright, you'll need sleep before your chopper ride in the morning. You're in Room 14-D. I hope you won't allow your feelings for Alyx to cause you to influence her decisions?"

"Of course not, sir. And what is more, I'm sure I won't even see her until morning."

"Quite true, Gordon. Quite true." Kleiner said with a twinkle in his eye. "Now, if you'll excuse me Gordon. I must attend to Magnusson now, he would appear to still be in shock. Don't forget Gordon: Room 14-D. Have a restorative rest, good lad." Kleiner left a slightly bewildered Gordon in the hallway, something about the glimmer in the Doctor's eye unnerved him. He supposed he would quiet his questioning mind by seeking out Room 14-D.

Gordon wandered through the base, returning to the Resistance Operatives common area.

"Well, if it isn't my old pal Gordon!" Barney slapped a hand on Gordon's back and shook his hand.

"Barney, I'd like to stay and have that beer you owe me but I'm leaving the base in a chopper first thing tomorrow and I really need some sleep."

"Yeah, yeah. Kleiner told me all about it when I first got here with my team. 14-D's this way." Barney led Freeman to the door, picking up a cardboard box to the left of the door frame. "This is your clothes ration... Give Alyx my condolences." Barney turned the corner before Gordon could explain that he might not see her before he leaves. He shrugged to himself and continued into the dark room, feeling along

the wall for a light switch. A lamp flickered on, some feet away from Gordon despite his fingers not finding a switch.

"Gordon? Well, now that does explain the whole having two beds thing I was trying to figure out. Kleiner didn't tell me we'd be rooming together." Alyx's eyes were red from crying, but her voice was cheerful.

"He didn't tell me either, I suppose the base's barracks are full of refugees who made it out of City 17. But in any case, we should probably get some sleep." Gordon did not allow his surprise to have Alyx as a roommate effect his voice.

"You're going to sleep in the HEV suit? Jeez Gordon, not everywhere is a hazardous environment, you know." she chuckled weakly. "Shower's in the back. You should get yourself cleaned up, I almost forgot what it felt like to not be covered in dirt and grime. You can put the Hazard Suit in the closet over there, it will still be there in the morning for you to wear I'm sure." Alyx pointed a slender finger towards a shabby oak wardrobe. Gordon obeyed and began the tedious job of taking off the orange suit. After several moments of work Gordon had removed all of the armor pieces and the suit itself, revealing what looked like was once a white tee shirt and jeans. The shirt was maroon and stiff with dried blood, the jeans ripped and shredded.

"Gordon! Are you okay?" Alyx asked, terrified by the state of his clothes.

"I'm fine. We all have our wounds; I just don't have much time to tend to mine. I've been on the move almost nonstop since I reached City 17 with the Combine on my tail, no real opportunities to stop and examine the scars." Gordon said, pulling the shirt over his head and tossing it casually into the garbage.

"Oh my god, Gordon you're still bleeding!" Alyx gasped, even more horror struck. "Hold still, let me patch you up." she rummaged through her old drawers and pulled out a first aid kit. She put a large square gauze pad on the left side of his chest, securing it with medical tape. "Hang on, Gordon. Do you mind if I check to see if you have a broken rib? Your bruises look like you might have one." To this Gordon nodded and Alyx felt along the bruises with careful fingers until Gordon winced. "Just as I thought. Broken." Alyx began wrapping his ribs with an ace bandage, securing that with more tape. She began conducting a further inspection of Gordon's upper body. "You have a lot of scars Gordon..." Gordon nodded again, glancing into her worried eyes for a split second before walking into the bathroom without a word.

He took a long shower, washing the dried blood away and cleaning out his wounds. He had forgotten how wonderful hot water felt on the skin. He stood for several moments just allowing everything that had happened in the past days to wash over him. Eli's dead. He didn't allow it to fully hit him earlier, he knew he had to be there for Alyx. But Eli... Eli was like a father to Gordon. Always giving him advice and guiding him in the right direction. Everything Eli said was law to Gordon. What is the resistance going to do without him? Gordon didn't know how to answer that question, it stung dully in his mind. They'll all turn to me to lead them... but I can't. I have work that must be done. A cold brush of air greeted him as he exited

the deluge. He ruffled his wet hair with a towel before rifling through the box of clothes Barney handed him. A white shirt with an orange lambda in the center seemed to be the only shirt that wasn't a woman's size. He pulled it over his head, stepping into a new pair of jeans from the box. He walked back into the main room, wiping his glasses on his shirt.

"You got new clothes? I must say I'm very jealous." Alyx joked, running her fingers along the spines of the books on the large bookshelf in the corner.

"I think there are some in here for you too, most of them look like they're about your size." Gordon handed her the box.

"Sweet, these are some of my old clothes from City 17 before... well, before all hell broke loose thanks to you." she smiled and pushed him playfully. "I'm dying to get into these fresh clothes, turn around for a sec?" Gordon hesitated for a millisecond, but obeyed. "All done, really Gordon you can turn back. Always the gentleman, aren't you Gordon?" He nodded slightly, slowly turning back to face her. She laughed.

"We really should be getting to bed within the next half hour," said Gordon.

"Jeez, Gordon. You really want to sleep don't you! Well, I'll let you have first pick on beds."

"No, you're already got that one set up. I'll sleep here." Gordon took the bed closest to the door. Alyx sat cozily on top of the covers of her bed, book in hand.

"Hey, Gordon... I was wondering something." Alyx began, closing the book. "Do you think I should go with you tomorrow? I mean, I'm sure Dr. Kleiner told you 'not to influence me' or something like that but I really need to know. Do you want me to come with you? I want to help you in any way I can, I would never ever want to hinder you."

Gordon took a deep breath. "Alyx, you are probably the only person I would trust fully with my life. You've never let me down."

"Thanks Gordon, that does really mean a lot. I suppose you would have a little trouble trusting people since the whole Resonance Cascade catastrophe, but you didn't answer my question."

"I would miss you if you stayed at White Forest. I don't know what I would do without you" I mean... I meant as far as... well you're the best hacker I know."

"Gee, Gordon. You're gonna make me blush!" Alyx joked, but her cheeks were slightly flushed.

"Goodnight Alyx." Gordon smiled at her.

"Goodnight, Mr. Freeman." Alyx giggled and turned off the light.

End

file.